GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2887
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2001
PLIGHT OF INDIAN FISHERMEN
P.D. ELANGOVAN;T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken to provide safety to the Indian fishermen;

(b) whether a large number of Indian fishermen were caught in the high seas by the patrolling authorities of the neighbouring countries, particularly Sri Lanka and Pakistan;

(c) if so, the details thereof, and the number of Indian fishermen killed and arrested by the Sri Lankan and Pakistan authorities separately during each of the last three years;

(d) the number of persons released during the said period and the number of persons still detained in Sri Lankan and Pakistani jails; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to get them released?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES)

(a) The Navy and the Coast Guard maintain regular surveillance in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and along the International Boundary Line. Assistance is provided to the Indian fishermen observed to be in danger.

(b) to (d): The details based on the available information are contained in the statement, annexed.

(e) The Government of India keeps regular contact with the Governments of Sri Lanka and Pakistan through diplomatic channels for securing the release and repatriation of Indian fishermen.

ANNEXUREREFERRED TO IN THE REPLY GIVEN IN PARTS (b) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. FOR 15.3.2001

(1) Details of Indian fishermen arrested by Pakistan and Sri Lanka authorities during the last three years :-

	1998	1999	2000
Pakistan	187	159	44 +
Sri Lanka	55	26	25

+ Of these, the Government of Pakistan have confirmed detention of only 29.

(2) Details of Indian fishermen who died due to alleged firing in the last three years :-

	1998	1999	2000
Sri Lanka	07	02	05

No Indian fisherman is known to have been killed by Pakistan Maritime Safety Agency.

(3) Details of Indian fishermen released by Pakistan and Sri Lankan authorities during the last three years :-

	1998	1999	2000
Pakistan	195	122	22
Sri Lanka	55	26	25 ++

++ One fisherman died while in detention.

As per records, at present there are 130 Indian fishermenin Pakistan custody. Of these, the detention of 15 is yet to be confirmed by Pakistan authorities. At present, there is no fisherman in the custody of the Sri Lankan Government.